

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 /026 W

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FM AMEMBASSY LISBON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2946

INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY MADRID IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY PARIS IMMEDIATE

USMISSION NATO IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T LISBON 3046

EXDIS

DEPARTMENT ALSO PASS IMMEDIATE INFO TO: COMUSFORAZ LAJES FLD
AZORES, CINCLANT NORFOLK VA, DIA WASHDC, USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN
GERMANY, USNMR SHAPE BRUSSELS BEL

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, PO

SUBJ: POSSIBLE AZORES REVOLT

REF: (A) PONTA DELGADA 162; (B) USUN 1706 (NOTAL)

1. I AM CERTAIN DEPARTMENT IS AWARE OF IMPLICATIONS IN CONNECTION
WITH DEVELOPMENTS REPORTED REF (A), WHILE WE HAVE BEEN AWARE OF
SEPARATIST GROUPS IN VARIOUS STAGES OF FORMATION, THIS IS FIRST
INFORMATION ON POSSIBLE MILITARY INITIATIVE. IF INDEED SEPARATISTS
HAVE SUBSTANTIAL MILITARY SUPPORT THIS COULD MAKE A SIGNIFICANT
DIFFERENCE. IF THEY DO NOT, FAILURE SEEMS VIRTUALLY ASSURED
WITH ALL THE NEGATIVE CONSEQUENCES THAT IMPLIES FOR
USG-GOP RELATIONS. IT IS USUAL IN THESE KINDS OF
SITUATIONS FOR PLOTTERS TO EXAGGERATE THEIR STRENGTH IN
ORDER TO ENLIST OUR SUPPORT.

2. POPULAR SUPPORT: CONSERVATIVE CAST OF POPULATION
COUPLED WITH INCREASINGLY LEFTIST TREND IN LISBON LEADS US
TO BELIEVE THAT AZORES POPULATION WOULD SYMPATHIZE WITH SEPARATISTS

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MOVEMENT, PROVIDED THAT MOVEMENT HAD EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP

AND REASONABLE CHANCE OF SUCCESS. SUCH SYMPATHY COULD BE IMPORTANT. WE QUESTION, HOWEVER, WHETHER POPULATION WOULD BECOME INVOLVED IN SIGNIFICANT PROPORTIONS IN VIOLENCE, EITHER ON ONE SIDE OR THE OTHER.

3. REACTION ON MAINLAND: WE DOUBT AZORES REVOLT WOULD STIMULATE A COMPLEMENTARY UPRISING IN MAINLAND PORTUGAL. HOWEVER, IF UPRISING APPEARS TO HAVE SOME PROSPECT OF SUCCESS, ELP AND OTHER CLANDESTINE OPPOSITION GROUPS MIGHT TRY TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF SITUATION AND INITIATE OPERATIONS HERE.

4. SPINOLA: WE ARE PARTICULARLY ALERT TO POSSIBLE SPINOLA INVOLVEMENT. HIS PROPOSED MAY 30 TO TRAVEL TO U.S. COULD BE LINKED TO AN ATTEMPTED AZORES REVOLT, AND HIS PRESENCE IN U.S. COULD BE AN ATTEMPT TO FORCE USG HAND. RUMORS ALREADY EXIST IN LISBON THAT HE IS HEADING FOR THE AZORES, AND WE NOTE THAT AMBASSADOR TO UN VIEGA SIMAO, SPINOLA INTIMATE, TOLD AMBASSADOR BENNETT ON MAY 21 "CHANGED IN LISBON HAD ONCE BEFORE BEEN AFFECTED FROM MOVEMENT BASED IN AZORES" (REF B).

5. IF SPINOLA PARTICIPATES AND IF ELP AND OTHERS JOIN IN, WE FORESEE A DRAWING TOGETHER OF THE MAJOR POWER CENTERS -- MILITARY AND CIVILIAN, TO DEFEND THE TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY OF PORTUGAL. SPINOLA CONTINUES TO OVERESTIMATE HIS OWN SUPPORT IN THE MILITARY, HIS INVOLVEMENT COULD SERVE AS A RALLYING POINT FOR THE LEFTISTS.

6. REACTION AGAINST U.S.: UNLESS IT ENDED WITH TERMINATION OF AFM CONTROL OF GOP -- WHICH APPEARS UNLIKELY -- REVOLT IN AZORES WOULD HAVE HARMFUL CONSEQUENCES FOR USG-GOP RELATIONS -- WITH OBVIOUS NEGATIVE IMPLICATIONS FOR FUTURE OF LAJES. IF REVOLT DOES BREAK OUT, THE USG IS CERTAIN TO BE DENOUNCED. ONE IMMEDIATE RESULT WILL ALMOST CERTAINLY BE ATTACKS ON U.S. INSTALLATIONS IN PORTUGAL. CONTINGENCY PLANNING TO PROTECT U.S. PERSONNEL IN PONTA DELGADA, LAJES, OPORTO, AND LISBON SHOULD BE CONSIDERED.

7. STANAVFORLANT: DEPT. IS AWARE THAT STANAVFORLANT'S
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EIGHT SHIPS, INCLUDING U.S. FRIGATE USS EDWARD MCDONNELL, WILL BE PORTED IN LISBON UNTIL JUNE 3.
CARLUCCI

NOTE BY OC/T: LISBON 3046 NOT PASSED ABOVE ADDRESSEES.

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